

Woonsocket Health and Wellness Committee Meeting
September 26, 2016 4:00pm
Woonsocket Middle School – Hamlet Building
60 Florence Drive, Woonsocket, RI 02895

Present: C. Boudreau, M. Thompson, S. Mrocza, D. Engels, R. Trudeau, K. Macbeth, D. Burke, E. Shalvey, E. Coble, P. Roth, C. Agudelo, D. Martin

The meeting began at 4:10pm.

Approval of minutes from April 25, 2016 - Motion to table: The minutes for April 25, 2016 were approved at the May 23rd meeting.

The subcommittee will approve the minutes from May 23rd and September 26th, 2016 at the next meeting.

E. Burke

2nd E. Shalvey

Unanimously approved

Update from Woonsocket Health & Wellness Policy Subcommittee – D. Burke has been working on the Health and Wellness policy with E. Shalvey, P. McGee, and S. Pawlina, all year, along with the Rhode Island Healthy School Coalition. Ms. Macbeth also joined the subcommittee at the last meeting. They attended workshops facilitated by Karen Wetherill several times last year and also met with other schools districts to compare wellness policies. The rough draft is ready and will be given to Karin Wetherill to test. D. Burke expects that once tested it will be given back with more recommendations. Once the policy has been completed it will be presented to the school committee for approval and eventually it will be available on the website. Evaluation within the schools will take place as part of the state required assessment. Stronger language is required, and physical activity and nutrition are key components. Many of the policy requirements have already been determined at the state and federal level. D. Burke would like to see more people get involved.

Review of State of RI Recess Law – 16.22.4.2 Free-play recess – The requirement for physical activity is separate from physical education. K. Macbeth stated that the state law was passed last June. When the final piece of legislation was introduced it became more and it included 20 minutes of uninterrupted, unstructured recess. This is for grades K – 6. One issue on the elementary level is that the teachers are bound by the Basic Education Plan of 330 minutes, and the union contract says 30 minutes for lunch, so they need to add 20 minutes recess on top of that. It is impossible to follow all of them. K. Macbeth is thankful that her teachers have agreed to serve breakfast in their classroom; they can eat their breakfast and start instruction time. At Harris, the recess is structured so that the teachers bring their students out for recess when it is right educationally and when it fits into the daily schedule. This has been very successful. Bullying issues seem to have been reduced and social skills have improved. The teachers are monitoring their own students, rather than lunch monitors. S. Mrocza stated that there are also less play injuries because there is less congestion. The BOKS program is starting tomorrow. Every elementary school in Woonsocket is participating. K. Macbeth is going to check if RIDE has made a

final determination regarding 6th grade. She will forward the information to M. Thompson. If RIDE makes changes there will likely just be revisions to the same general law.

E. Shalvey stated that breakfast is free for all of the students in the city. Lunch is either free, reduced, or full price, based on the student's income qualification. All lunches are free during the summer. The state uses the free and reduced lunch applications to determine the funding formula including Title I and E-Rate reimbursement for technology. Woonsocket would probably qualify for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) where all students would get free or reduced lunch in all schools but one provision is that WED no longer accept free and reduced lunch applications. The school department would still need to collect income data, but it would be requested on another form. E. Shalvey explained that the district has difficulty with getting the forms completed, even for those that qualify. Sending home a different financial disclosure form to families could be difficult because there would be no incentive to complete it.

Discussion regarding new RI Healthy School Coalition website – There is a new Rhode Island Healthy School Coalition website, www.rihsc.org. It would be worthwhile to take a look at it. E. Shalvey will make arrangements with technology to access the website at the next meeting. There are a lot of good resources for many different things such as activities for indoor gym or recess and the list of approved products for a school store.

Discussion regarding topics/initiatives that the Woonsocket Wellness Committee would like to work on – E. Burke attended the heroin and opiate awareness presentation at City Hall last week with Dr. McGee. The US Attorney of RI, the FBI and the DEA were all part of a discussion panel to talk about prevention. This discussion was geared toward the city but there is also a need to address this within the schools. The URI School of Pharmacy students are coming into the high school to introduce an awareness program for 9th graders. E. Coble from Farm Fresh told the committee a very good website to get information is preventoverdoseri.org; this is a part of the governor's prevention plan. C. Agudelo informed the committee that the Health Equity Zone has identified overdose prevention and recovery as a priority area for Woonsocket. A community group meets monthly to discuss strategies. She would like to connect with someone in the teen community to represent the teen population and provide more support to this age group. She will reach out to the Woonsocket High School Counselor. The Woonsocket Prevention Council is going to make a presentation at one of the upcoming school committee meetings.

D. Martin asked about the curriculum for Health Education for middle school and high school. The Health Equity Zone is working to address teen pregnancy. She feels it would be helpful if they were all on the same page. Medical staff from Thundermist are willing to come into the schools to help teach the health curriculum.

Representatives Patricia Roth and Emily Coble from Farm Fresh were present to address the subcommittee. They often participate in Health and Wellness subcommittee meetings throughout the state. This nonprofit organization is working to build a local food system that values the environment, health, and quality of life for Rhode Island farmers and eaters and informed the committee of the nutrition education options and programs that are available to the community and schools

The meeting adjourned at 5:22pm.